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EVERYTHING ABOUT SEWING

FUR & FUR-LIKE FABRICS

FROM VOGUE PATTERNS





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FUR WITH A FLOURISH

The cuddly world of fur is at your feet . . . and around your shoulders . . . keeping you not only warm, but just a bit more female! The look of fur is an imperative in fashion, so choose it for your next sew-at-home foray into that heady realm. Accept

the challenge and explore the possibilities of a new material!

Fur has no secrets you can't master.

All you need is a spirit of adventure and the ways and means we've loaded into this little book.



The Nature of the Beast

A little timid about taking on a fur project? Why? Perhaps, as is usual when you're hesitant about something, it's because you don't know enough about it. The key to sewing fur, both the kind grown by animals and the new ones that are the result of man's ingenious technology, is in the way they grow; the way they're made. This is their story—all you need to know to understand them and their special sewing techniques. Some sewing experience is necessary before you dive into fur, but probably not nearly as much as you think.

The principles and techniques for real and fake fur are so similar that IN MANY CASES WE USE THE TERM FUR INTERCHANGEABLY. When there's a distinction, look for the descriptive terms REAL FUR and FAKE FUR or FUR-LIKE. Each section contains hints for both. Only the chapter called The Fundamentals divides general sewing information into The Great Fakes (pages 25-31) and The Real Thing (pages 32-36).

The Pretenders

Turn your next jaunt to a fabric shop into a safari. Swathe yourself in furs the easy way—glamour comes by the yard! Some are so realistic they could fool a mother leopard—and others exist in colors nature never dreamed of. Long and short-haired, velvety, satiny, or shaggy enough to remind you of grandpa's bearskin rug, fake furs have benefited greatly from the advances in textile construction. There have recently been tremendous improvements in quality, appearance, and handling ease. Wild types and tame types can be simulated in the splendid new synthetics, in fabrics engi-

neered for the right color and sheen, the most luxurious appearance and convincing touch. Pony and zebra and mink, astrakhan lamb and giraffe, tiger and sheepskin are some of the great fakes.



Your initial choice will be on the basis of how they look—but to see how they will handle, peer a little deeper into their making.

The first thing to understand about fake fur is that at heart it's still a fabric, and follows the rules of its structure. It will act like the type of fabric it is, stretching on the bias of the weave or the crosswise of the knit, falling in big round folds if it's thick, or in soft drapery if it's light. It's likely to be thicker than regular fabric for a simple reason. Fake furs are, most commonly, pile fabrics. They consist of the FACE and the BACK. The face, or pile, is the mat of furry fibers or yarns which rise from the flat fabric surface. The back (as we will use the term) is the structure of the knitted or woven fabric which holds these pile yarns together. It is seen from the wrong side of the fabric, and also from the right side if you separate and look through the pile.

The two distinctions you should note are the ones which matter the most as you sew: whether the backing is knitted or woven, and whether the pile is long or short.



KNITTED



WOVEN

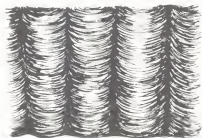
The knitted back structure is generally more flexible and easier to work with. The woven-back structure is often stiffer. Easing is more difficult, and the fabric may have a thinner appearance if there is a low proportion of pile surface to actual fabric. A fabric with a dense surface pile covering the back will look and feel richer than one with scant pile and heavy, visible back.

Furs may also be simulated by several other methods. Flocking produces short pile fabrics (no longer than $\frac{1}{4}$ "); cut fibers are dropped onto a woven base fabric coated with adhesive. Another procedure called tufting punches many yarns through a woven backing fabric, forming loops on one side which are then sheared, napped, and polished.

Finishing procedures also have a great influence on the final appearance of a fur fabric. Most fake furs are treated with a heavy glue

which stabilizes the pile and secures it firmly to the backing. It may change the texture of the fabric, giving it a stiff, scratchy feeling.

Napping, or brushing the fur with wire brushes, arranges the pile and gives it luster and smoothness. Some fakes are permanently brushed in a swirled formation, imitating the natural growth of hair along the backbone and underside of an animal. They may also be dyed or curled in special patterns to look more like natural fur.



Don't be confused by the fact that some fabrics with the look of fur have no pile at all, but are simply printed with a fur-patterned design. Corduroy, though it has a slight pile, is not dealt with here, nor are any of the others with a fur PRINT rather than a TEXTURE like fur.

The Real McCoy

The richly patterned, thick, swirling coats of animals bred for beauty are a symbol of luxury—both because of the initial expense of quality fur, and the skill and painstaking labor that go into it to produce a garment. Fully let-out mink coats involve hundreds of tiny pieces of fur seamed together in strips about $\frac{1}{4}$ " wide! That kind of work is, of course, beyond the realm of the lady who sews at home, but the principles of sewing fur are not difficult to understand. Once you do, you will not only have greater respect for the

professional in fur, but you'll probably have lost your fear of approaching Aunt Hilda's old persian lamb, or even new pelts. Have you been thinking of fur as a sewing challenge you didn't know how to tackle? Well, allay your qualms, unleash your imagination, and let us give you the facts you need to successfully develop a project of your own.

What do you know about fur? That it's the protective hair of an animal, growing from the animal's skin.

Imagine a furry creature. Its fur grows in a pattern influenced by gravity and the shape of the animal's body, which develops as the animal grows, moves, and breathes.



The short, stiff, straight-haired furs such as calf have a more pronounced hair pattern than the long, soft, shaggy types like sheepskin which can be brushed so the hair lies more or less in the same direction down the back.

The fur is thickest on the back for protection, but thins out toward the underside and grows in swirls. The arrangement of colors in the fur may be symmetrical on both sides of the pelt, or in a random all-over design. Most furs have short, soft, fuzzy underhairs for warmth, combined with longer, glossy guard hairs for protection.



The straight-haired furs have a distinct nap, which is worked to run down or horizontally—never up. These are the furs to wear as the animal did, so they feel smooth.



The curly furs swirl madly, and have no nap to consider. Cut and stitch these in any direction, and they'll match nicely.



The skin on which you do the actual sewing is a form of leather. It is completely unlike ordinary fabric, not being composed of threads. A cut edge is quite strong if the fur is new and resilient, but the entire skin area weakens as the fur ages. The hairs that form the fur surface evenly cover the skin; when cut edges from similar fur areas are stitched together in a tiny seam, the seam disappears into the thick furry texture. Leather will not fray, since it has a fibrous structure a lot like that of felt.

These characteristics are the keys to fur. What you know about it will help you understand the special techniques you need to sew it. So accept the challenge, stock up on knowledge, and go to town with the smashing effect of fur!

Fur Words

- ☐ **Back:** The fabric structure which supports the pile in a fabric. It is seen from the wrong side of the fabric, or from the right side if you separate and look through the pile. May also be called backing.
- ☐ **Break:** A crack or separation which may develop in the surface of pile fabrics or fur, exposing the backing or leather. Considered a defect.
- ☐ **Density:** The number of fibers in a given area of the surface of a pile fabric. A gauge of the fabric's quality and appearance.
- ☐ **Face:** In furs and fakes, the area of hair or pile visible from the right side.
- ☐ **Grain:** In fur, the way the hair lies on the pelt, usually from neck to tail. In leather, the conformation of the skin cells defining the length and width. Distinguished from a fabric, where it means the direction of the threads composing it.
- ☐ **Grotzen Line:** The line along the backbone of some animals distinct in color and texture from the rest of the pelt. May be conspicuous, as in skunk and chipmunk, or more subtle, as in mink.
- ☐ **Guard Hair:** The long, glossy protective hair showing at the surface of a fur.
- ☐ **Let Out:** To lengthen a real fur pelt by splitting it down the center, then dividing each half into thin diagonal strips which are re-positioned and re-stitched together forming a longer, narrower piece. Strengthens pelt; permits fur fashions to be designed in unbroken lengths from neck to hem.
- ☐ **Mutation:** Fur whose natural color has been changed by selective breeding.
- ☐ **Natural:** In furs, the color and pattern as produced by nature.
- ☐ **Pelt:** The tanned and treated fur and skin of a single animal.
- ☐ **Pile:** A knitted or woven fabric whose surface is composed of extra yarns that rise from the backing fabric in cut or uncut loops. May also refer to just the furry surface fibers.
- ☐ **Shading:** The gradual changes in color which may exist in a fur pelt or which may be designed into a fake fur to simulate the natural effect.
- ☐ **Shave:** To trim the surface hair or pile from a given area of a fake fur to facilitate seaming by thinning the fabric.
- ☐ **Shearling:** The pelt of a sheep which had been recently shorn. The hair is under an inch in length, and the surface is relatively smooth.
- ☐ **Supple:** Soft, easily flexible yet strong. A desirable quality of skillfully tanned fur skins.
- ☐ **Under-Hair:** The soft, short, fuzzy hair closest to the skin of a fur, serving as insulation for the animal.
- ☐ **Wild Fur:** Fur taken from trapped animals rather than those raised on a ranch.

Toward Perfect Teamwork

Among the greatest pleasures of sewing is the opportunity to choose for yourself the combination of color, texture, and silhouette to flatter and express you and to blend in a practical working team. Here's your chance to use your fashion sense.

Here, also, is the step where you assemble the materials and tools that will be the real medium for your sewing endeavors. This combination of theoretical and practical knowledge will pave your way toward rave reviews in both the artistry and the craftsmanship of fur sewing.

The Long and The Short of Fur

From your experiences with clingy crepes and chunky tweeds, you probably already realize how important it is to understand the interplay between fabric and your figure. A smashing fur garment uses the same principles—only more so!

First, know your own physical pros and cons. Then learn what combination of style and fur will play up the assets and minimize the defects. To choose a great pattern and the perfect fur, you'll need some facts—both aesthetic and technical.

The key to designing in fur is this: make sure the weight of the fur and the lines of the pattern complement the shape of you. Different hints apply according to whether the hair is long or short, regardless of whether it's real or fake.

Long Fur Pointers

For the furs with hair longer than $\frac{3}{4}$ ", you'll need to use your keen eye for proportion. If an entire garment of long, shaggy fur would overwhelm you, but you love the look of it, start thinking like a designer.

BALANCE the proportion. In a skirt, a long-haired fur can make heavy hips and legs look huge, but in a vest it will draw the eye away.

Use **ACCESSORIES**! Thin legs and arms will look much more so in a big, shaggy garment, but boots and gloves can be perfect visual foils.

Try **PARING DOWN** the silhouette by using a leather or leather-look for the bodice and trim, or coordinate a fur jacket with a smooth knit fabric for sleeves and pants.



CAMOUFLAGE is a great game to play with long fur. In a coat with just the right proportions, it may be your best figure flatterer. A voluminous cape gives no impression of fitting—and disguises figure faults for both over- and under-endowed.

Short Fur Pointers

Don't make the mistake of lumping all furs into the same "fattening" category. Some short-haired furs are actually thinner than tweed. These can be used liberally in the same way you would use a sturdy wool fabric. Examine the fur in terms of the actual length of the hair and more objectively in terms of its visual bulk.

While you're considering the depth of the pile, don't forget about the fabric pattern!

If you ordinarily have to avoid large, splashy prints, a big pony-skin pattern will not do you justice. Large-printed, short-haired furs may seem bulkier than dark, solid longer ones, for instance, and mat textured furs are more slimming than glossy ones. Zebra stripes, however wild, are still stripes and subject to all their optical quirks.



Finding the Lines

Any pattern may be the right one. The look of fur is fashion's pet, and many patterns are designed especially for it. Check the fabric suggestions on the pattern envelope, but don't limit yourself to the ones that specifically recommend fur. Many of those suited to heavyweight fabrics are ideal.

Choose an uncluttered pattern for a first attempt at fur. Its character is so strong that it carries even the simplest style. Since the techniques involved in sewing it may be quite different from anything you've come across before, test your skills and your material before you tackle too complex a project.

There are four important things to try to avoid in a pattern for fur:

1. Lots of ease or gathers. The thicker furs, especially fakes, can't be forced into gathers. Few home sewing machines would sew them, and they'd be too fat to be flattering.
2. Intersecting seams. These are only a problem with fakes—again, because machines balk at bulk.
3. Overlapping layers of fur, such as pleats or multi-piece garments. The more thickness, the less sleek the silhouette.
4. Non-essential seams. Remember that some seaming in a pattern is necessary to create the shape of the garment—while other designs have extra seaming just for visual detail. Your choice should be from the first type, because **SEAMS THEMSELVES DON'T SHOW IN MOST FUR GARMENTS**. Even if the fur is thin and the seams do show, it's still best to avoid unnecessary ones. They will distract from the fur's effect.

Above all, let yourself go! Follow the rules, but don't be inhibited by the "luxurious" image. Be up to date. Fur is for fun, and anything you feel great in is the style for you!

Finding the Fur

Having found the perfect pattern, you're faced with your second major step—getting the fur. Because fur is valuable stuff whether it's real or fake, you'll want to know exactly how much you need. And, before you invest cash and time, you'll want to be sure your creation lives long and happily as part of your wardrobe. As you consider a potential purchase, keep in mind the questions you should always ask: what sort of fiber or fur is it made of? How should it be cared for?

FAKE FURS are produced in the generous widths of 54" and 60". They will need the **WITH NAP** layout, but you must consider the pattern of colors together with the direction of the hair to know whether you must treat the cloth as a napped fabric, an even stripe, or simply an all-over pattern. In cases where no yardage is given for the fabric's width, referring to the *Vogue Sewing Book's* Fabric Conversion Chart will give you an idea of how much to buy. When you plan only a few parts of the garment to be made in fur, it's best to bring the necessary pattern pieces with you.

The fabric's composition is important to know. Fake furs very often have a backing of one fiber and a surface of another fiber or blend. Cotton, acrylic, or polyester are common backing materials, while the face may be a rayon, nylon, mod-acrylic, polyester, acrylic, or wool. Look for the manufacturer's recommendations on the bolt to tell you how to take care of them—different fibers need different handling.

With **REAL FUR**, your own judgment is the only reliable guide to the quantity you'll need. Remember that unlike fabric, fur can be pieced invisibly to take advantage of the best parts and conform to the pattern

shape, so you can use nearly the entire surface area of good quality fur. New skins are available as individual pelts or sewn together in rectangles. Buy them with your pattern in hand. If the fur has a visible difference in weight or color down the middle of a symmetrical pelt, or if there are dominant designs in the fur to be considered, plan the positioning of the pelts carefully to make the best use of them. Consider the direction of the hair, and also whether skins are to be used vertically or horizontally.

If you are dealing with an old coat, allow for the fact that some areas of the fur may be too worn or too weak to use. Choose a pattern that needs less fur than the original garment so you can eliminate the questionable spots and cut it out easily. Beware of really old skins, though. Weak pelts don't merit the time and effort it takes to reconstruct them. For hints on testing the fur's strength, see page 16.

Design for Contrast

A sewing project involves more than the simple choice of one main fabric. It is the artful coordination of several fashion fabrics, trim, lining, and support fabrics in a beautiful working team. The combination must not only please the eye; it will have to function effectively in terms of weight, care, durability, and sewing ease.

The Accents

Many of the strongest fashions in fur and fake fur involve other fashion fabrics. Bindings, bodices, and sleeves, as well as extra parts of two-piece outfits, can vary the garment's visual effect with a change of texture: a different fur, a real or pretend leather or suede, or a woven or knitted fabric. Choose something with enough body to complement

the weight of the fur, and keep in mind the character of the design. Use the fur to set the mood, then follow it up with the perfect companion. Rough wool with a shaggy, long-haired fur would have a great, sporty flavor, while an elegant long evening vest might combine white satin and a spotted fur.



A short-haired fur plays against a long-haired one in the same way a flat fabric would. Use fur-on-fur with an eye toward the principles on pages 9-10; combine their colors and textures with fashionable dash.

In some areas such as collars, cuffs, and plackets where two layers of fur might be both unwieldy and unnecessary, the underneath, or facing layer, can often be cut from a sturdy, flat, compatible fabric such as wool broadcloth, wool flannel, or cotton duck.

The Liners

Especially with the "fun fur" styles, lining is a chance for you to go wild! Splashy prints and vivid colors rarely show through the density of fur, and they cheer you up every time you wear them. A happy, quilted cotton calico might be just the mood for a sturdy, fake fur, winter jacket and tough enough to stand several seasons' wearing.

Hint: Be sure the sleeves are lined in something slippery to permit them to slide on and off.



Rich-looking furs in classic styles deserve the luxury of heavy satin linings, and the same fabric serves as an ideal hem facing. Opulent embroidered silk is the ultimate, but it can be very nearly duplicated in less expensive and more durable fabrics. Try the pattern-with-pattern approach: a houndstooth check lin-

ing a printed fur. Or use a sleek fur lining continuing into the collar and cuffs of a wintry wool coat.



Take care that the fabric you use to line a rough-finished fake fur is resistant to abrasion. The backing of many pile fabrics is coated with a type of glue to secure the pile fibers, and the scratchy texture might weaken a fragile lining.

The lining must be compatible in care qualities as well as in style and weight. The fake furs that may be washed should be lined in something washable, and furs requiring dry cleaning may benefit from a lining which can be sponged clean. Real furs, which must be cleaned by a professional, can sport any kind of lining which strikes your fancy since the fur process is quite safe. In short, choose the lining in character with the fur and the garment it's made into.

The Shapers

Even though furs and fake furs have considerable body by themselves, several kinds of construction fabric may be involved in sewing them—for strength, support, and the opulent emphasis of padding.

Their weight is up to your good judgment. A very dense, long-haired fur can hardly be controlled by a feather-light interfacing, and a soft fur is outweighed by a stiff, heavy one. You are the artist who determines the right choice.

Underlining: There may be a wide variation in the weight and texture of the backing in fake fur, but, in most cases, their firmness and general stability eliminates the need for underlining. For real furs, a stay of flannel or silk may be used to strengthen a fragile skin and to eliminate undesirable stretch, or a thick, soft fabric such as lamb's wool may be used as an interlining to accent the feeling of luxury.

Interfacing: Interfacing is necessary for support in areas like collars, facings, and edges which may stretch. Depending on the character of the fur, one of several interfacing fabrics may be suitable. Unbleached muslin, cotton flannel, hair canvas, or a very lightweight felt may prove most effective. A sturdy hair canvas or non-woven interfacing relieves wear, minimizes stretch in both real and fake furs. Permanent press interfacing is perfect for the washable fakes. Choose one or a combination of the above types.

Padding: Flannel and felt give a subtle emphasis to the soft roundness of a real fur, and a version of the layered padding tailors use for shoulders is especially luxurious under thin furs. Padding of quilted cotton serves the same purpose in trim areas, such as collars and cuffs. Refer to page 37 for complete directions.

Collecting the Tools

The right equipment, always important to a professional job of sewing, is particularly so in fur. These are the special tools you may need for sewing fur and fakes. Refer to

the appropriate section to see how they're used, and choose the ones best for your particular project. Several substitutes are suitable, so improvise if necessary.

	Fake	Both	Real
Backing & Preparation	no special equipment necessary		tack hammer unfinished board pliers push pins rust-proof brads staples and stapler sponge stiff brush vinegar
Fitting & Layout		ruler measuring tape muslin transparent tape weights glass head pins	
Cutting	small sharp scissor	X-acto® knife single-edged razor blade	
Marking	tailor's chalk needle and bright thread	felt-tip pen ball point pen	tailor's crayon
Sewing	#14 machine needle #6 hand needle heavy-duty thread	twill tape wire brush grosgrain ribbon thimble	glover's hand needle fine needle silk thread beeswax
Pressing	mallet or hammer Jiffy Sew® rubber cement	needle board thimble scissor handle	
Finishing		covered snaps crocheted hooks, eyes, rings shoulder pads	

Mastering the Preliminaries

The steps you take before you sew—all the familiar procedures—take on a new flavor when the subject is fur. Special handling, in some ways easier than the techniques you're used to, will help you get to know your medium. And that's any artist's basis for a great start!

Try It Out

Why a fitting muslin? Because your fur or fur-like deserves the chic that only a perfectly-fitting garment can have. Real fur has no leeway for alterations after cutting—it's cut with no seam allowances, to be sewn edge to edge. Fakes may be trimmed to a narrow seam or sewn with the full $\frac{5}{8}$ " seam allowance, but in either case, a pile fabric is difficult to rip out and alter.

Another important function of the trial copy is to enable you to recheck the suitability of the design for the fabric and you. A fur garment, real or fake, involves both patience and cash, and making a muslin gives you the opportunity to change your mind before you invest much of either.

The "muslin" isn't necessarily of muslin! Any heavy fabric, such as felt, that approximates the weight of the fur skin or backing is suitable. If you use muslin, by all means choose a sturdy canvas type, not the flimsy kind.

Prepare whatever personal pattern adjustments you normally make, then cut out in test fabric. Mark fabric on the wrong side, including all symbols and lines. Construct the garment, and try it on.

Check and adjust the fit at major fitting areas. Refer to the *Vogue Sewing Book's* guidelines for muslin alterations and follow the instructions for removing ease from a set-

in sleeve if necessary. Consider possible adjustments in the light of the fur's bulk—remove pleats, move intersecting seamlines so they don't quite meet.

Remember that the test copy will not look exactly like the finished garment; the fur will have the added thickness of the hair or pile.

Allow for that extra visual bulk as you judge the appearance of the garment in the mirror, but be careful not to fit too tightly to compensate. Overfitting may cause real fur skins to tear, and will make both real and fake furs pucker and strain in unattractive wrinkles. Try on outer garments over the sort of clothes they'll be worn with. Then mark and pin on such design details as pocket flaps and buttons. Are their placement and size right for your proportions? Decide for good whether you like the design as well on you as you did in the drawing in the catalog.

Remove garment, and, using a second color, mark all seamlines as follows: from the right side draw the tip of the marker along the tiny trough made by the seam. Indicate clearly the wrong side of each garment piece. Then disassemble the muslin garment.

The muslin pieces can serve as your personal pattern when you cut out your fur. This technique is suited to any carefully planned garment, but has an extra bonus for furs: it's much easier to position the pattern on a single fabric layer when you have a duplicate of each piece. Then you won't have to lay out and cut half the garment, then flop each piece, lay out, and cut again. It also accounts for any fitting differences you may have between the right and left sides, because each side of the muslin has been marked accordingly.

Get It Ready

Remember pre-shrinking and straightening? Not for fur! The fabric and pattern preparations are very different from those you're used to and geared to the fascinating quirks of fur sewing.

Preparing The Fakes

The preparation involved in fake furs is minimal. Most knit-back fakes have a permanent finish on the backing which stabilizes the grain and the pile, making straightening unnecessary as well as impossible. Pre-laundry a washable fake before you cut it out, or it may surprise you by shrinking later. In most cases, fake fur as you buy it is ready to sew.

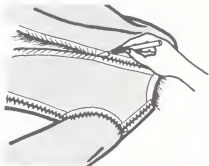
Preparing Real Fur

Getting real fur ready to sew is a fascinating and important step. The same techniques used by furriers can be adapted and borrowed at home for rewarding results. It's most likely you're working on old fur—here's how to prepare it.

Test: Pinch the skin of your fur. Is it dry? Brittle? Powdery? Hold it between your fingers and pull it. Does it stretch slightly, or does it tear? Catch some of the hairs on the surface and give a gentle yank. Do they come out, or are they anchored firmly? Fur which is really weak would not support a full reconstruction job, and is not worth the trouble. Fur which is still good might have a weak backing, but would still merit the extra effort of a fabric stay. See page 23 for this technique.

Disassemble: Taking apart an old fur garment which you intend to remodel requires patience, but it's an instructive operation. Take mental note of all the techniques you see. Remove the lining, interfacing, and padding, and save the inner construction fabrics for reuse if they are unusual since they may be diffi-

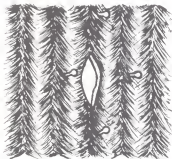
cult to find again. Then examine the remaining garment and determine which seams must be ripped out to result in as few flat areas of fur as possible. A coat, for instance, usually consists of separate pieces for collar, facings, sleeves, and body, and each of these may have shaping darts and details which must be opened or removed to yield a flat fur surface. Open **ONLY** those seams that hold the fur in a curved shape; ignore the others that are just for piecing. From the inside, carefully remove the necessary stitches with an X-acto® knife or single-edged razor blade.



Refresh: Old fur that has been in storage in a closet frequently collects dust and a slightly musty odor. Wiping the hair of the pelt with a household sponge dampened with a small amount of vinegar in water, will help to deodorize, clean, and brighten it. Test first on a waste piece for color fastness and hang in the open air until all odor has disappeared. Then brush with a natural-bristle hair brush.

Repair: Before you proceed, examine your "working fur" carefully for damaged places, weak spots, and signs of wear which should be replaced. Mending can be done invisibly by cutting out the worn spots and stitching in identically shaped patches of good fur taken from areas which won't otherwise be used. If the fur has noticeable markings, the

replacement piece must be chosen from an area with similar texture and coloring, and napped furs must have patches cut with the nap running in the same direction. On straight-haired furs, avoid seams which run directly across the grain of the hair. Patches are best cut in a shape with diagonal lines, such as a diamond, since the closer a seam follows the grain of the fur the less likely it is to show. Mark the area which needs replacement with pins from the fur side.

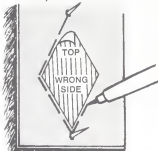


Turn to the skin side; mark with a ruler and tailor's chalk or ball-point pen between pins.

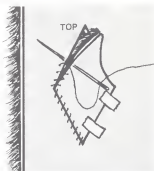


Cut along markings as directed on page 22. Carefully trace outline of removed piece onto paper, marking wrong side and top for a patch pattern. Then, using the same fur swatch as a color guide, determine what piece of leftover fur is to be used for the patch and mark the top and bottom points with pins. Turn

to skin side and carefully position paper pattern, wrong side toward you, as marked. Trace around pattern; cut out patch.



Tape into proper position in fur. Sew into place with a small overhand stitch. Turn to page 35 for hand sewing technique.



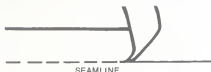
Piecing to Fit: Real fur has a unique quality in the world of fabric—you can put it together to suit the pattern before you cut it out, and if the piece you have is smaller than the pattern you can add more, **IN-VISIBLY**. As with mending, choose the additional piece from an area that matches in grain, coloring, and texture. Mark the general outline of the pattern on the main piece of fur, then mark the pattern to show how much more must be added. Cut out the extra piece, as above, matching grain, and stitch the addition to the main piece with a small, neat whipstitch (page 33) to complete the pattern shape.

Preparing a Pattern

If you've made a muslin, that's your pattern! If not, mark your tissue pattern for adjustments—both muslin and tissue are treated just alike in the following steps.

First, see that all your pattern markings and seamlines show clearly on the muslin or tissue pieces.

Trim Seam Allowance: The next step varies depending on whether your fur is real or man-made. Real fur is backed with leather, so the cut edges will not fray. Because it is stitched edge to edge, seams require no seam allowances, and they can be trimmed off of the pattern tissue before cutting.



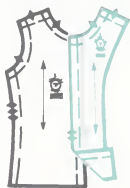
On fake furs, several seam treatments may be used according to the weight, type of backing, and height of pile. Thin-backed fabrics, those with scant or short pile, and those which fray easily are best stitched with $\frac{1}{2}$ " to $\frac{5}{8}$ " seam allowances. These may be later trimmed and bound or overcast, or if the fabric is not too bulky, left full width.

Fabrics with a heavy, stable back that doesn't fray easily and dense, long pile will probably take well to an adaptation of the real fur technique in which the seam allowances are trimmed to $\frac{1}{8}$ " and stitched with a wide, close zigzag stitch. This procedure eliminates bulk and allows for a smooth seam.



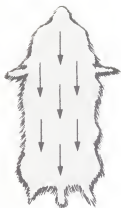
Mark the appropriate seam allowance on the pattern, and trim any extra muslin or tissue off along adjusted cutting lines.

Join Pattern Pieces: If two adjoining pattern pieces such as a coat front and facing, or left and right back have a straight seamline parallel to the grainline when placed on a flat surface, you can join them before cutting in order to eliminate the bulk of an extra seam. Be absolutely sure that the seams really are ruler-straight, because many patterns are designed with a very subtle but important shaping curve. Match and tape the seamlines against each other, being sure you have joined the seamlines rather than the cutting lines of the pattern.



Mark For Grain: The direction of the hair is the next important consideration. Special care must be taken that straight-haired fur is cut so the hair will fall properly in the finished garment.

Mark the pattern with arrows to indicate the direction the hair should lie. It nearly always runs down—from neck to hem—unless it is worked horizontally, as in some collars or decorative borders. When you are ready to lay out, spread the fur out face down on a large area and mark the back with arrows showing the direction of the hair.



Then as you lay out the pattern, just match the arrows with those on the fur back, and you've conquered successfully one of the trickiest of fur's problems.

Layout

Patterns, as we've mentioned, are laid out on a single layer of fabric or fur. Instead of pinning, they can be taped in place.

The distinctions in laying out fur are made necessary by the long hair and the nap. These pointers will guide you through them—the steps may be new, but they're simple.

Use your muslin pattern just as you would a tissue one. It's been made to your special measurement, with seams trimmed especially for your fur sewing technique. If the fitting corrections vary for the right and left sides, be sure not to confuse them. The marked wrong sides of the pattern pieces must face up as you place them on the wrong side of the fur.

If your fur has a pronounced stripe, layout problems may involve matching as well as nap. The principles are the same as those for matching stripes and patterns on ordinary fabric—triple-check before you cut!

Matching

Special care is involved in sewing fur with visible stripe or prominent design. The designs of most striped or spotted fakes can be seen clearly from the wrong side, so matching can be done as you lay out your pattern for cutting. Real pelts, however, must be matched from the right (fur) side, since pattern does not show on the skin side. The stripe, called the GROTZEN LINE, is matched just as a fabric stripe.



Find the right position for the pattern pieces by placing them on the right side. Then mark by pushing the point of a glass-headed straight pin through the skin at specific marking points on the pattern edge. Chalk-mark the point where the pin comes through to the skin or backing side. Then turn fur over and place pattern according to pin marks.

Piecing For Effect

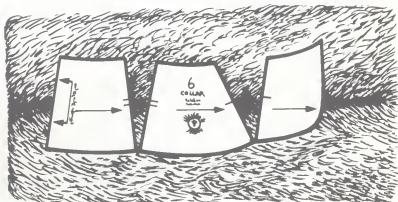
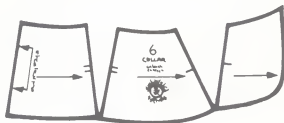
If you're working with real fur, or a thick fake fur in which seams will not show, you can adapt another furriers technique.

The nap of a straight-haired fur lies generally in one direction down the center of the pelt. When a curved pattern piece such as a collar is

placed on it, the fur may be pieced so the grain or stripe flows with the curve, and in opposite directions away from the center back.

Divide the pattern piece with straight lines, as shown, into the number of sections that will best suit the pattern and nap of the fur, considering a dominant stripe as either border or central motif. Mark matching points in dividing lines for correct placement, and cut along lines.

Patterns for real fur need no seam allowances. (If you are working with fake fur, add whatever seam allowance you are using throughout on both edges of each slash.) Mark the direction of the grain with arrows on each pattern section, and indicate other placement marks. Place the pattern on the fur as for matching, page 19. This technique can also be used to add horizontally-striped borders on a vertically-striped coat.



Transfer the Pattern

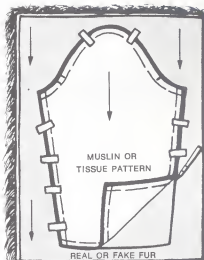
For FAKE FURS, "With Nap" pattern layouts will serve you perfectly. Follow the one for the fabric's width. REAL FURS demand your judgment, since ordinary layout rules don't apply. You can make use of every precious inch, because you can literally build the fur in a patchwork to fit the pattern, as described on page 17. Follow matching and grain indications, and place the pattern to best advantage, using all the available fur. Key the extra pieces carefully using matching points as on opposite page, so you'll know where and in what position they fit onto the main pattern area.

Anchor Pattern: After you lay out the pattern, double-check grain, position, and matching points. Then fasten the pattern to the fabric or fur, as follows. Using masking, transparent, or cellophane tape, stick the edges of the pattern to the backing or skin every four inches or so. If necessary, hold the pattern down with weights while taping. This method is recommended for the long-haired fakes and for all kinds of real fur.

Short-haired fakes can be pinned as usual. Long, thin glass-headed pins go through the backing easily. When put in at an angle nearly parallel to the surface of the fabric, they will cause fewer problems with wrinkling the pattern.

Trace Carefully: Mark around cutting line with tailor's chalk, wax crayon, or a felt-tip pen in a color that shows up clearly. Darts, notches, and other notes may be marked at the same time. Then pull away or un-pin the pattern before you cut.

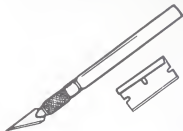
For tissue pattern pieces with a foldline, position pattern and trace around cutting line and foldline. Then turn pattern over and trace around cutting line again for a complete garment section.



Cutting

The quality of a sewing project in fur or fake fur depends a great deal on your care and skill in cutting. Special methods must be practiced to avoid shearing the hair or pile. Nothing proclaims a home sewing job in fur more clearly than seams marked by the shorn, haircut look. Only the back must be cut—the fur separates by itself.

The best tool to use is either a single-edged razor blade or an artist's instrument called an X-acto® knife. This is shaped like a pencil with replaceable blade points. It's very easy and relatively safe to control, and is readily available from art supply dealers.

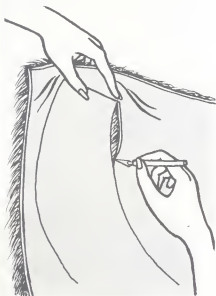


Another artist's tool convenient for cutting any kind of fur is a mat knife. To work properly, blades must be extremely sharp.



On long-haired fur and fakes scissors don't work, because the opposing blades cannot avoid trimming that part of the nap which falls past the cutting line. Instead, these are cut from the wrong side with a single blade and lifted from the table surface to prevent the blade from damaging the hairs.

The technique for cutting real and fake long-hairs is the same. Begin your cut at a corner of the marked outline. Raise the fur from the cutting surface with one hand. Hold the blade at a 45° angle from the skin or backing with the other hand and guide it gently but firmly toward you as illustrated. Cuts should be made in a long sweep.



Scissors can be used on short-haired fakes when you're leaving the full seam allowance.

Cut along the outlines of the pattern pieces. For darts in real fur see page 36 for cutting technique; for narrow-seamed fakes, see page 30. Do not cut notches, but continue through the notch marking along the cutting line.

Separate the fur carefully, as it may be matted together on the surface and might tear. Then stroke the cut edges with your fingers to remove any loose hair.

Real Fur Special

The mysteries of fur sewing are little known except by experts, but taking your cue from them makes for extra insight in understanding their secrets. Real fur demands special attention to its distinctive features; these hints will help you make the best of them and overcome some of the signs of old age and wear. Perking up color, blocking, and staying-are handy techniques JUST FOR REAL FUR.

Color Touch-up

The area around pockets and patches in an old fur may have faded or dulled in color. You may want to renew it using hair or fabric dye, or permanent ink in a color matching the original. Test carefully beforehand on a scrap, then apply with a vegetable brush and rinse in clear water.

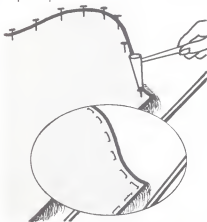
Blocking

Fur skins, especially when wet, have an ability to stretch and readjust their shape. Through careful blocking after cutting, you can take advantage of this property to eliminate imperfections and wrinkles caused by piecing or repair, and to stabilize the garment pieces.

Place the fur, hair side down, on an unfinished wooden board, taking care that the hair lies properly. Then dampen the skin with water using a stiff-bristled brush or a soft cloth. Stroke gently with the flat of the hand from the center toward the edges.



Fasten to the board at the edges with rust-proof staples, wire brads, or push-pins.



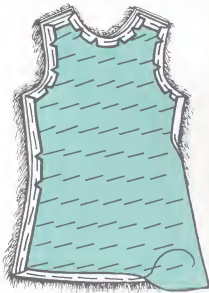
The skin will need about 24 hours to dry. Remove the fasteners carefully to avoid tearing the skin, and check the shape of the original pattern piece against the blocked fur. If different, re-mark and trim fur. Fluff up the hair by steaming with an iron held 2" away.

Staying

A fragile fur whose quality is still good enough to merit re-use may need the support of a fabric stay. Use a fine, lightweight fabric such as china silk or sheath lining. Cut the stay according to the fur pattern, adding 1" on all the edges. Position stay on back of fur and stitch loosely with rows of diagonal tacking stitches about 2"-3" apart.

You can also use one of the fusible bonding agents cut to the same size as the garment piece to fasten stay fabric to fur skin. Follow directions and TEST CAREFULLY, to make certain the heat of the iron will not scorch the skin. Keep nap lying properly while pressing.

Then fold the stay fabric back even with the fur edge, clipping where necessary, and fasten with long running stitches. Construction seams are stitched through both the skin edge and the folded stay edge.



Staying is particularly advisable when the fur garment is close-fitting in shoulder area.

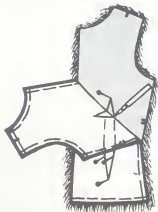
Marking

With furs and fakes, marking is a special bonus—fast and easy. The delicate, invisible techniques that other fabrics need aren't necessary. Any marks which may penetrate the thick skin or backing are hidden by the pile, so placement lines, seam and center lines, notches and fold-lines can all be drawn on the back of the fabric or fur. You can even make notes to yourself!

Tailor's marking chalk, wax crayon, charcoal pencil, ball-point or felt-tip pen, may prove to be the most successful on the backing texture you are dealing with, and using several colors in a coded system can be part of your shorthand to distinguish different kinds of marks. As always, testing is the way to find the best technique.

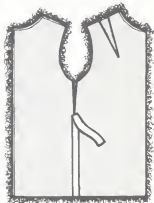
The ink in a felt pen may rub off the backing of some fake furs; use a dry marker (charcoal or ball-point) on these. Light colors are easy to find a contrasting marker for, but dark ones need wax chalk or very light color crayon to show up.

With the pattern in place, stick a pin through each marking indication, lift the pattern, and mark where the pin point rests. Then mark all stitching lines.



Test Fit to be Sure

To save yourself a possible waste of effort, try the garment on in the actual fur before you stitch the seams. Since they are so difficult to pin, thick furs and fakes can be held together successfully for a try-on with 1" wide masking tape stuck on the backing fabric or skin. Real fur, having no seam allowances, is taped edge to edge. Refer to page 36 for treatment of darts.



Fakes which are to have $\frac{1}{8}$ " seams can be overlapped $\frac{1}{4}$ " and held securely with diagonal basting. See page 30 for dart treatment.



A thinner fake fur with full seam allowances can be pin- or hand-basted for a trial fitting. If you require fitting changes anywhere you cut the garment too large, re-tape or re-baste the necessary adjustments and try on again. When you are sure of the fit, trim the fur along the adjusted cutting lines, and you are sure of a fitting success.

The Fundamentals

The preparations have been worth while—you've chosen a pattern that's great for your fur, and you've proven that it suits and fits you. All the tools you need are assembled, and you've searched out the few unusual ones that make the difference between an awkward sewing job and an efficient, professional one. All the linings, notions, and construction fabrics are right for their jobs and chosen for their suitability. The preliminary steps are done well and thoroughly. Now sew ahead into a fascinating project.

This section describes the basic seam techniques specifically for Fake and Real Fur. These are the important principles you'll use for general sewing and for all the more complex steps in the next chapter, *An Inside Job*.

The Great Fakes

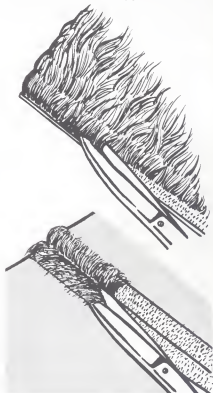
There are several things to remember as you set off on this sewing adventure into fake fur. It's a fabric even though the fuzzy face it presents to the world may conceal the fact. But it has the extra bulk of pile. All the things you do to change it from fabric to wearable clothes have to account for its thickness—**REDUCING BULK** is the reason for many of the special sewing tricks. The methods used for sewing real fur were developed for this purpose and are readily adaptable.

There are two basic seam treatments explained in the following pages, and the right choice depends partly on the fabric's strength. **WIDE** ($\frac{5}{8}$ ") seam allowances and special care are in order for fabrics with a soft backing that comes apart, but if the backing is secure, **NARROW** ($\frac{1}{8}$ ") seam allowances help reduce

the thickness that tends to collect in the seams. Of these approaches, arrive at the right one through a combination of judgment and experiment, keeping an eye on our hints.

Shaving Fakes

One of the most important ways to reduce bulk in a garment of fake fur is to shave the hair away from the seam allowances. Use a sharp pair of small, pointed scissors, and trim only the hair as shown either before or after stitching the seam. Hold the scissors flat and parallel to the table and trim a small amount with each stroke to avoid a lumpy look.



If the hair is fairly dense, you might try shaving it away from each $\frac{5}{8}$ " seam allowance before stitching the seams. Use a zipper foot resting only on the seam allowance. As usual, test first. Be sure to shave only the surface hairs, not the fabric underneath.

Needles and Thread

Machine sewing on fake furs may require one of several needle sizes. Lighter weights may be suited to 14 or 16, very heavy ones could need an 18. Threads also vary with the fabric weight. Heavy-duty mercerized cotton, nylon, or cotton-wrapped polyester are suitable.

For hand sewing, use a size 7 sharp threaded with heavy-duty cotton coated with beeswax. The wax strengthens the thread and keeps it from troublesome tangling.

There is a complete dictionary of handstitches on page 32. Turn to it for suggestions—the stitches are applicable to a number of situations in fake fur as well; use them according to your discretion. Test the weight of thread and the needle size on a scrap of the fabric and make sure your stitches hold without showing through the fur.

One final handsewing note: if you've never learned to use a thimble, this is an excellent place to start. The fur will camouflage a few less-than-perfect stitches done with an unfamiliar thimble, and you'll be much more comfortable.

Wide Seams

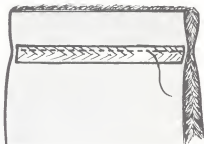
The full seam allowance and many standard sewing methods can be used when you're dealing with a THIN FUR. Short hair ($\frac{1}{4}$ " or less) and/or a relatively fine or loosely woven backing indicate that the easiest technique to use is to treat the seams like those in a regular fabric. They are left with a $\frac{5}{8}$ " seam allowance, and the pattern direc-

tions are followed with few variations.

Basting: In this type of seam the basting is done by hand with running stitches about $\frac{1}{4}$ " long. Do the fitting and re-baste any alterations. Then go over the basted seams and pull out the hairs caught in the stitches with the point of a pin.

You may find it sufficient to pin-baste in some areas where you don't need careful hand-basting. Heavier furs can be held together for stitching with paper clips or even spring-type hair clips.

Taping: Particularly in flexible or knit-backed fake furs, seams such as shoulders which undergo extra stress should be reinforced with $\frac{1}{2}$ " or $\frac{1}{4}$ " twill tape. In the wide seam technique, baste it along the seamline with the edge extending $\frac{1}{8}$ " into the seam allowance and stitch it permanently as you sew the seam. Tape is also a handy stabilizer to use in areas like pockets.

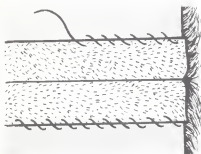


Stitching: Reduce the pressure on the presser foot to medium-light and test tension, pressure, thread, and needle sizes on a fabric scrap. Stitch the seam through both layers of fur and the tape, taking special care to keep as much hair as possible out of the seam.

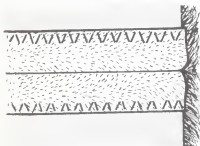
If the fabric is stretchy and a long seam is done without tape, pull it slightly as you stitch so the seam will not split in wearing.

Finishing Seams: When you use a wide seam allowance, the problem arises of how to finish it after it is stitched. Fake furs are messy at the cut edges, so you'll want to tidy them up, and the purpose of pressing can be accomplished at the same time.

HEMMING the seam allowances to the fabric with a loose hemming stitch will solve both problems with one process—tidying the straggly edge threads and holding the seam open at the same time.

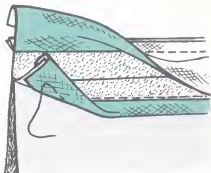


A wide **MACHINE ZIGZAG** or hand overcast stitch can also finish the seam allowance, and other raw edges such as those at hems can be enclosed with this technique.

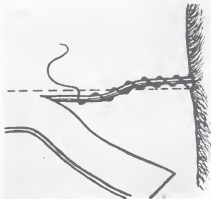


You may choose to **BIND** the edges with commercial single-fold cotton or rayon bias tape or bias strips of a lightweight fabric such as underlining. Press pre-folded tape open from the wrong side, shaping

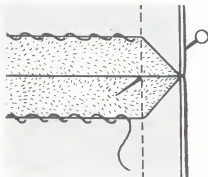
in a curve if necessary. This technique, known as the **Hong Kong Finish**, is a perfect touch of the couture for situations where the seams will be exposed on the inside of the completed garment. Lining may not be necessary or desirable in some fake furs, and this is an excellent choice of seam finish for these. Match edges of fur and binding; stitch in $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam, right sides together. Turn binding around raw edges and stitch from right side through binding and fur.



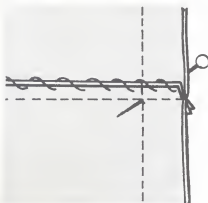
TRIM AND OVERCAST those seams in which you want a slim, neat appearance. After you have constructed the garment with wide seam allowances that have supported all the wear and tear of handling, trim them to $\frac{1}{8}$ " and stitch together in a tiny ridge with a zigzag machine stitch or a small, firm overcast stitch.



Intersecting Seams: Obviously, the major problems with bulk will occur when several layers of fabric coincide. Trim away all possible fabric and hair, and finish both seams by your chosen method before joining them in another seam. If left wide, match the crossed seams exactly at the seamline with the point of a pin. Baste or pin-baste, and stitch the seam as usual. Then trim corners diagonally as shown and use the same finishing method on the new seam.



If you have finished the seams to be crossed by trimming and overcasting, fold the short seam allowances in opposite directions before stitching the new seam.



Eased Seams: Most commonly found in the cap of a set-in sleeve,

at the elbow, and at the bust area of a princess seam, easing can pose one of the trickiest problems with bulky, hard-to-handle fake furs. There is a choice between two methods of reducing ease. You can alter the pattern tissue to remove it before you cut, or you can pinch it into tiny darts.

If you need to add darts in some areas, follow these procedures. When the ease is in a sleeve cap, leave the side and sleeve seams open until the armhole seam has been stitched. Matching markings, baste the seam in place except for the area to be eased, and manipulate the fabric into both ease and darts.

Find a point which falls just at the bustline, elbow, or shoulder. Mark this for the foldline of the dart. Then, hold the fabric up against yourself and mark where the point of the dart should go—at the point of the bust or elbow, or about $1\frac{1}{2}$ " to 2" below the armhole seam of a sleeve.

Pinch the fabric together at the dart markings as much as necessary and pin dart in place. Don't try to remove too much ease in one dart. If the pattern and fabric require it, consider distributing the ease between two smaller darts. Ease in a sleeve cap should be distributed this way so the seamline of a finished dart does not cause a bulky intersection at the shoulder seam.



Mark stitching lines an equal distance from the foldline, ending at the point. The dart must be relatively long and thin, in order not to make an unattractive lump in the fabric. Curve in the stitching lines slightly toward the dart to create a rounded line.

Baste dart in place. For stability, stitch the dart twice on the same line, pulling out hairs after the first stitching. Then trim to $\frac{1}{8}$ " from seam, and zigzag or overcast the small ridge.

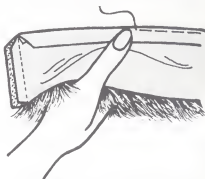
Enclosed Seams: Here is another case where it is imperative that you eliminate as much extra fabric and fur as you can without weakening the seam. An excellent way to reduce bulk in areas with enclosed seams, such as collars and cuffs, is to face them with a flat fabric, or to cut a straight enclosed seam, such as a cuff, on a fold.

Trimming is the by-word. When you are using the full seam allowance, standard trimming and grading procedures apply. Leave the garment seam allowances wider than the facing. Clip inward curves and notch outward curves just to the staystitches. Especially with enclosed seams it is important to shave the hair from the seam allowances. Do this before you notch or clip, but after you trim.

The seam must be stitched quite firmly to enable you to trim closely. Decrease stitch length at corners by 2-3 stitches per inch for reinforcement. Make sure as you stitch that the tension is not too loose, and that as much hair as possible has been previously pulled out of the seam. If necessary, stitch the seam a second time for extra strength.

After the seam is turned, it may need another step—understitching—and most will need a thorough pounding into place. Pull all hair out of the turned seam. By hand, understitch the facing through both seam

allowances, without catching the top layer, using a long running stitch and working from the wrong side.



Darts: In short-haired or soft fabrics, baste dart in place, then pull the hairs out of the seam with a pin. Stitch as usual from the end toward the point, and tie stitches at point. Trim dart $\frac{1}{2}$ " from stitching, shave fur, and finish seam allowances as on a regular seam. Reinforce point of dart with iron-on mending tape, as on page 30.

Joining to Flat Fabric: The use of an unnapped fabric to reduce the bulk of a garment presents some new snags while it solves others. The solution to the slippage problem is to keep the unnapped fabric as close as possible to the BACKING of the fur while it is being stitched. Baste as closely as you can without puckering the seam, pull the hair out of the basting, and stitch carefully in the direction of the nap with the unnapped fabric uppermost.



Narrow Seams

The sturdy, shaggy, long-hair furs that ask to be made into something warming often refuse to be sewn into good-looking seams by regular methods. The answer is to take them at their word . . . they look and feel like real fur, so try sewing them that way!

Cut the garment out according to the directions for narrow seams (page 18) in which all seam allowances are reduced to $\frac{1}{8}$ ". For particularly dense furs, carefully shave hair away from the tiny seam allowance before stitching (page 25).

Arrange garment pieces face down on a table so the cut edges meet and marking points match. Hold edges in place with cellophane or masking tape or paper clips. Basting can be done with overcasting stitches.

Taping: Tape stays of $\frac{1}{4}$ " or $\frac{1}{2}$ " twill tape or seam binding are recommended for long seams which should not stretch, for seams on the crosswise grain of knit fabrics (such as shoulder seams), and in any area which receives extra strain in wearing or construction.

One way is to sew tape to fur, edge to edge with a hand zigzag stitch as shown on page 34. Then catch the tape in the stitches of the seam as it is being sewn.

As an alternative, first stitch the seam, and finger press by rubbing with a thimble or scissor handle as on opposite page. Then catchstitch $\frac{1}{2}$ " twill tape along both edges over the ridge formed by the seam as shown on page 34.

Hand Sewing: Hold edges with cellophane tape, basting, or paper clips as described above, and push stray hairs out of the seam with your needle. Use a close, neat blanket stitch to sew edges together, catching $\frac{1}{8}$ " of each fabric edge in stitches.

Machine Stitching: Set the machine at a wide ($\frac{1}{8}$ ") and close (12 to 15 per inch) zigzag stitch. Test on scraps of fur to determine the right tension and foot pressure. Feed the fabric in slowly, keeping edges even and using a heavy, blunt needle or hat pin to tuck the stray hairs in. The machine needle should enter the fabric once $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the cut edge, then again just barely past the cut edge as the zigzag continues.

Darts: Cut the dart area out of the fur, leaving a seam allowance of $\frac{1}{8}$ " inside the stitching line. Hold dart edges together with clips or tape, and stitch as above.



Reinforcing: Lightweight iron-on mending tape is helpful for reinforcing points of strain and areas in which the seam might prove weak. After stitching, apply tape according to directions at intersecting seams and on the points of darts. Use a press cloth to protect the back of the fur and test the temperature of the iron on a scrap of fabric.



Keeping the Shape

Fake fur, for several reasons, is a pressing dilemma. Because of its thickness, high pile, and often heat-sensitive fibers, you don't put the shape in with an iron as in most sewing projects—but fur still needs the shape that pressing usually gives. Don't leave your garment with that unprofessional lumpy look, but remember that the opulent appearance of fur depends on a rounded shape. Sharp edges are unnecessary as well as impossible. To stabilize a rich, rounded line and flatten seams and edges into shape, you have the option of several techniques, which often apply to real fur as well.

Pounding: This is an essential in collar and hem areas. First force moisture into the area by steaming the right side with an iron held 1½"-2" away from the fur. Then pound the edge vigorously with a wooden block or hammer against a needle-board or flat surface. Test on scraps to be sure it doesn't damage the lustre or nap of the fur. Fluff the fur with a ruler after pounding.

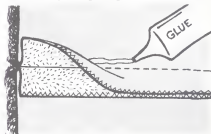


In the Finish: For garments sewn together by the narrow seam method and reinforced with tape, pressing may be unnecessary. Wide seams finished by a method such as hemming seam allowances open may also have the purpose of pressing accomplished already. Go over seam one last time with a pin to pull

out caught hairs. Then rub seam from the wrong side with a thimble-covered finger and fluff pile by steaming.



Glue: Another convenient way to make wide seams stay flat without pressing is to glue them. A handy fabric glue called Jiffy Sew®, which is easy to use, readily available, and quite flexible when dry, serves very well in holding down unruly seam allowances. Rubber cement also does this trick. Seams should be held in the position they would be pressed in (over curves on a tailor's ham, etc.) for gluing.



Invisible Stitches: Use these to support and evenly distribute the weight of two-layered areas such as hems and facings. Collars may also need the support of invisible stitches to hold their shape. First sew the two layers together invisibly with the hemming stitch halfway between the seam or fold and the raw edge. Then, sew the edge in place.



The Real Thing

Sewing on fur is not for speed demons—but a handsewing buff will find in it a very special and satisfying pleasure. A careful hand seam blends a rich, soft fur in a completely invisible line. Confident seamstresses may want to try stitching it with an ultra-tiny machine zigzag stitch—beware, it's tricky, but the basic technique is so simple you can learn to understand it in no time.

Avoiding and reducing bulk is easy in real fur, since there are no seam allowances to deal with! Everything is sewn edge to edge—so no trimming or clipping is necessary. Neither is there a problem with pressing. These facts simplify construction tremendously and, combined with rich and impressive results, make sewing with fur a rewarding adventure.

Needles and Thread

Sew with silk or heavy-duty cotton thread that's been drawn through beeswax to keep it from tangling and to strengthen it.

A leather needle is a wonderful device with a wedge-shaped point which cuts cleanly through the skin, making it much easier to pull the thread through.



Scour your specialty sewing shops for one of these, or consult a crafts catalog or shop. It may be called a glover's needle or a leather needle, and is available for either hand or machine sewing.

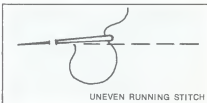
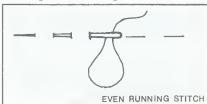
Use a thimble! Even if you don't ordinarily, you will certainly need one to force the needle through the tough skin of the fur.

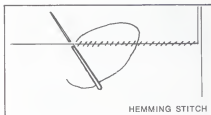
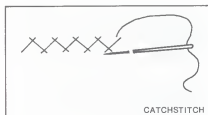
Hand Stitches

There are many hand stitches for different procedures in sewing with real fur. All of them can be useful for sewing fakes as well. Each can do several jobs, and many jobs can be done with any of several stitches. Here are the stitches with their names and applications. Use the experience and insight that led you to sew fur — choose one of the stitches below which you feel is the best for the specific situation and the most comfortable for you.

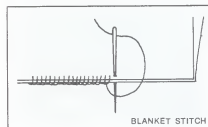
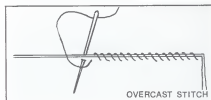
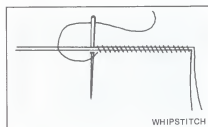
When you take a stitch into the skin of a napped fur, remember the nap on the other side. It is much less likely to show if the stitch is taken in the nap direction. Since most stitches have a diagonal variation, it is easy to find an alternative. Stitches are always taken into the back of the fur or the skin edge. Pick up just enough skin to make a firm stitch.

Basting and Tacking

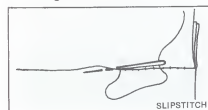




Seams



Hemming and Finishing



Taping

The added strength of tape is an indispensable factor in sewing with fur. It reinforces the skin by adding a durable woven edge to it, and it distributes the strain on the tiny seam over an area the width of the whole tape. Most furs tend to stretch and require some form of woven structure stitched into the seams for stability. In finishing edges such as hems and facings it creates a handle with which you can manipulate the fur, and when it is stitched down, forms an anchor for stitching linings and finishing fabrics, too.

Furriers use a type of seam binding with an adhesive back. However, as with most fur techniques, the home adaptation takes longer because the tape must be stitched on by hand.

As for fake furs, there are two ways of taping a seam: before seaming and after seaming.

Before Seaming: This method can be applied to any fairly straight edge, and is used on one or both of the skin edges to be joined, depending on the fur's strength. Place $\frac{1}{2}$ " or $\frac{1}{4}$ " twill tape on skin side of edges to be sewn. Keep tape flush with edge and attach with hand zigzag stitches. Miter corners with a tiny slipstitch.



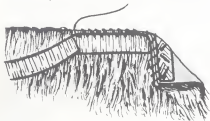
After Seaming: First, sew the seam through the skin edges. Flatten by rubbing with scissor handle, and fasten $\frac{1}{2}$ " twill tape to the skin side over the seam ridge with catchstitches. This treatment is especially suited to seams with ease or pronounced curves.



Finishing

Edges such as those of hems, facing collars and pockets need a finish for durability.

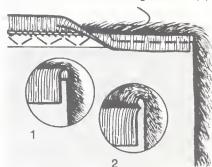
Binding: For any of these edges, tape as above. Edges flush, apply $\frac{1}{2}$ " grosgrain ribbon to the fur side of pelt with a close whipstitch.



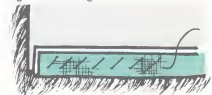
Open ribbon out, and flatten seam ridge with a thimble. Ribbon may be left this way for hemming, or fastened in the following ways.

Hem or facing edges often require a neat binding that can form an anchor for stitches. Proceed by turning the ribbon to the skin side, leaving a fine roll of ribbon still showing from the fur side. Sew it to the skin with uneven running stitches (1).

Other edges, such as those on a collar or pocket to be lined with a flat fabric or applied to a cloth garment, can be given a three-dimensional effect with a slightly different technique. Pull ribbon back to skin side so the fur forms a small, rounded roll at the edge. Sew to the skin with uneven running stitches (2).



Piping: This method can finish the lower hem edges of long-haired furs, where a turned-back hem may be too bulky. Fold a two-inch wide strip of firmly-woven lining fabric in half the long way, or use commercial piping or binding. (The length should equal that of the hem edge.) Place piping so fold extends just past edge of skin and sew in place with diagonal tacking.



Seams

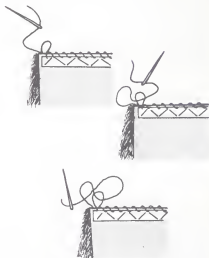
The general, all-purpose seam is the mainstay of fur sewing. It follows the same principle everywhere it appears, and nearly all seams and darts are treated exactly the same way. Fur sides together, tape or clip seam edges in position to be stitched, matching markings.

All seams are actually stitched together by hand with a close, evenly spaced whip or blanket stitch. Fasten the beginning of a seam by taking a few tiny stitches through the tape. Pinch the edges together closely with your thumb and middle finger about $\frac{1}{2}$ " from your needle, pull thread tight, and keep the stitches close to avoid puckering the seam. As you sew, a few hairs will creep out from between the edges. Tuck them back to the right side again with the point of your needle. Catch the tape edges as well as the skin edges in the seam, since they are necessary for strength.



At the end of the seam take several whipstitches in the same spot, then knot thread as follows. Take a tiny stitch in the tape or skin directly over your last stitch. Pull the thread until a small loop remains. Run your needle through the loop, pulling the thread a second time, until another small loop is formed. It is through this second loop that you insert your needle for the last time. Pull the

thread taut, forming an inconspicuous knot.



Sew from the very beginning to the very end of the skin. As you finish each seam, turn the fur to the right side and pull out any caught hairs. Smooth the seam by brushing gently over it with a hair or nail brush. Then turn to the skin side, and rub over the stitches with the handle of a scissor or thimble. The seam will flatten out, and the skin edges will adjust themselves and butt together in a professionally smooth, finished seam!

Seams can also be smoothed with the tip of a warm, dry iron, but be sure its temperature is no higher than a synthetic setting. Excess heat can cause fur to scorch.

Easing: The regular seam technique is adaptable for easing, but only in small amounts. The best taping method to use on an eased seam is the one in which the tape straddles the seam ridge (see page 34). This keeps the seams down to just the thickness of the two layers of skin. For comfortable handling, sew armhole seam first, then side and sleeve seams.

Match the markings at seam-lines, and hold in position with spring hair clips or paper clips. Distribute ease by spacing more clips evenly between the first two, about an inch apart. If you're right handed, stitch with the eased side toward your left hand and use your left thumb to force slightly more skin down against the previous stitches into each new stitch. As you arrive at each clip, both edges should come out even.



Darts: In real fur, darts are stayed with a continuous strip of twill tape, according to directions on page 34. Reverse and turn the tape in a V shape at the point of the dart, keeping the tape within the garment area with the inside edge exactly along the dart marking. Then cut out the dart area by running the blade along the very inside edge of the tape.

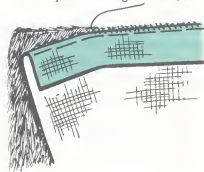


The edges should be just flush, and they are joined and stitched exactly as seams after cutting.



Intersecting, Enclosed, and Curved Seams: Since no seam allowances exist to be trimmed, turned, pressed, crossed, and bothered with, such situations are treated just as ordinary seams are.

Joining Real Fur to Fabric: Real fur is joined to fabric easily by a simple variation of the regular fur seam. Cut the garment pieces that are to be of fabric from the regular pattern, without removing seam allowances. Join fabric parts together in regular seams before attaching to fur. Then mark the seamline along the edge that is to be joined to fur. Notch or clip, and fold seam allowance along seamline toward wrong side of fabric. Baste gently with even stitches about $\frac{1}{8}$ " from fold. Press. Then match edge of fur and folded edge of fabric, right sides together, and sew just as a regular fur seam.



An Inside Job

Beyond the basics, fur sewing is filled with procedures that involve more detailed information. Hems and linings, fastenings and finishes are the important steps that make an art of sewing. These hints, which apply to both real and fake furs, can guide your project to a happy conclusion.

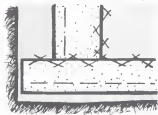
Interfacing

The weight of the fur and the backing, and the type and use of the garment can tell you what interfacing is just right. Any of several weights of non-woven interfacing or hair canvas, cotton duck, cotton flannel, or even felt may suit a particular area. Don't let a heavy fur fool you into thinking that interfacing is unnecessary, because the heavier the fur, the more it begs for the rich, rounded line which can only be achieved by careful under-construction, chosen wisely. Of course, heavier furs will require stronger support. Always attach the interfacing to the side which will be the top finished layer. Avoid catching the interfacing in a seam by cutting it $\frac{1}{4}$ " inside the seamline using the pattern's recommended grain direction. Sew to garment section with uneven running stitches.



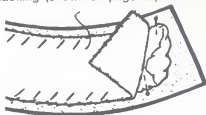
Where the turned edge is not joined to the garment in a seam (as in a hem or a continuous facing), the interfacing should extend about an

inch past the foldline to produce a smooth roll. Stitch the interfacing around all edges with catchstitches and along foldlines with uneven running stitches. Hems should be marked before interfacing is applied and interfaced with bias strips.



FUSIBLES, or thermoplastic bonding agents may be perfect for attaching the interfacing — but beware of the ironing hazards. Test the results carefully to be sure that the necessary heat won't damage the fur or fabric. The bonding agent will stiffen the effect of the interfacing, so you may want to choose a lighter one.

PADDING may be a benefit to some sections such as collars, cuffs, and shoulders. A layer of cotton batting, graded narrowest and stitched between sections of interfacing and flannel, can support a shoulder; several layers of flannel or flannel-covered cotton moulded to shape in a collar or cuffs will enhance the fur's luxurious appeal. Pin graded layers together and secure padding to interfacing with diagonal tacking (shown on page 32).

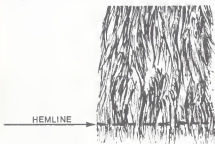


Hems

Your project is on the home stretch. Finishing the hem is a landmark that finalizes the look of the garment, and it should be a cinch, now that you know the "feel" of your fur. Remember that the effect you're trying to achieve is a round, rolled look. Fur makes it easy. Stitches will hide themselves, and pressing is unnecessary, so the most common hem problems are solved.

Marking

Try on the garment, and, if the closures are not yet attached, fasten with pins just as it is to be worn. Mark hem length from right side, keeping in mind that the finished hem will seem slightly longer than the hemline as it's marked, because the hair extends beyond the backing or skin.

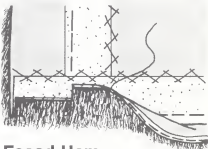


The best technique for marking hems will vary. Straight pins, the standard method, are lost in a dense fur, but safety pins may be the answer. Tiny pieces of transparent tape placed gently on the fur with the bottom edge at the hemline are another possibility. Turn the hem up as marked. Hold with masking tape, try on, and check hem length in a mirror, adjusting if necessary.

Transfer hemline to the backing with a marking pen or a line of thread tracing. Even up the hem allowance to the width appropriate for one of the three hem types (soft, piped, or faced), and trim off the excess.

Soft Hem

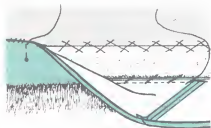
The depth of a soft hem is up to you. Anywhere from one and a half inches to three inches can be an effective hem allowance, depending on the position and on the weight of the fur. It is most appropriate for thin furs, where the double thickness of hair would not be a disadvantage. Cut bias interfacing strip 2" wider than the hem allowance, and apply to the wrong side of the fur with the majority of the strip above the hemline, and a $\frac{3}{4}$ " margin of interfacing below it. Sew along the hemline with uneven running stitches, and firmly catchstitch the upper edge to the skin or backing. Grade the facing area by trimming 1" away from the facing hem edge. Finish the fur edge with grosgrain ribbon. Turn up along the hemline, and sew the hem edges of garment and facing to the interfacing with a hemming stitch.



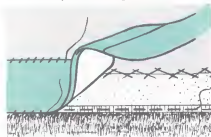
Faced Hem

This technique gives a hem both body and a luxurious look, and serves for both real and man-made furs, with a slight modification. Mark the hem allowance at 1". Cut a 4" wide bias interfacing strip, and apply it with $\frac{3}{4}$ " extending below hemline. Cut a 4" wide bias strip the length of the hemline from an attractive, sturdy lining fabric, and press to conform to the curve of the hem. Turn under $\frac{1}{4}$ " along the top raw edge and press.

For **FAKE FUR** hems, baste and stitch the hem facing directly to the raw edge in a $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam, keeping interfacing free. Gently press seam allowances toward facing from right side. Then turn the hem up along the hemline marking, and sew the seam allowance to the interfacing. Pin, and stitch turned hem facing edge over the interfacing to the backing with a hemming stitch extending all the way to the edge of the garment facing.



For **REAL FUR**, bind the fur hem edge with grosgrain, and press the seam open by rubbing with a scissor handle. Turn the fur up along the hemline and sew the extended ribbon to the interfacing and the skin with a close, firm (but not tight) running stitch, continuing hem to edge of facing. Press under $\frac{1}{4}$ " on the lower edge of the facing strip as well, and pin and sew the lower edge to the grosgrain, and the upper edge to the skin, using a hemming stitch. Pound in place along fold.



A garment with this style of hem needs a loose lining (page 40).

Rolled or Piped Hem

Both real and man-made furs with a very long, straight-haired pile can be hemmed at lower edges by one of several methods that use virtually no hem allowance. These procedures are valuable both for saving fur and for eliminating the bulk of a turned hem. The **ROLLED HEM** (for real or fake) involves binding the raw fur edge by hand or machine with grosgrain ribbon, as described for real fur on page 34. Sew the hem all the way to the facing edge, then fold the facing into place and loosely blindstitch the two layers of fur together at the edge. This hem is completed by slipstitching the lining directly to the grosgrain. Leave no fold for wearing ease in the lining, as it would droop past the hem edge.

The **PIPED HEM** is suitable only for real fur, as it doesn't actually bind the edges. Follow directions for piping an edge on page 34, and treat facing as above. Complete the hem by slipstitching lining to piping.

Lining

Because real fur may involve a very busy and rather unsightly wrong side, and because fake furs often have a scratchy finish, lining is an essential step.

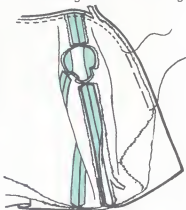
The type of lining best for fur is one which is stabilized along the seams. Unless the two layers are anchored together in places, the weight of the cumbersome fur combined with the abrasion of the rough fur seam ridges can cause discomfort and wear out the lining faster than necessary.

Interlining

To emphasize the luxurious look of the lining, the durability and warmth of the coat, or both, interlining is highly recommended. Lamb's wool gives an extra layer of padding and insulation, and softens

the look of a rich silk lining. Flannel serves both of these purposes with a lighter touch, and is more economical.

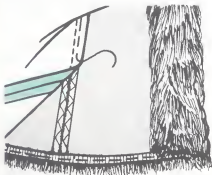
It is cut from the regular lining pattern, but the back pleat is omitted in the interlining. Then the pieces are basted to the corresponding lining pieces and treated as one with them when the lining is stitched. Trim interlining close to stitching.



Lining Application

Stitch lining together except for armhole seams. Press seams open. Staystitch facing edge.

Position back of lining, wrong sides together, on back of garment, and sew lining seam allowances to garment seam allowances or tape along each of the main seams.



Sew armhole edges together. Slip sleeve lining, wrong side out, into sleeve, and slipstitch armhole seam of lining. Turn under the lining edge and slipstitch to facing edge to within four inches of hemline.

There are two ways to finish the hems and facing corners of a standard lining: either loose or attached.

For a LOOSE lining, mark and finish lining hem, making lining $\frac{1}{2}$ " shorter than garment, and finish sewing vertical edge to garment facing. Add 1" French tacks at side seams and center back, holding lining to garment.



For linings to be ATTACHED along the hem edge, loosely sew hem edge of garment facing in place. Trim raw edge of lining $\frac{1}{2}$ " below finished edge of hem; press under $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Match seams, and sew edge of lining to binding of fur, using a close hemming stitch. Finish sewing remaining vertical edge of lining down to the garment facing.



Lining to Edge

Simple and speedy, this technique is most useful for small garments such as vests. Make garment and lining of the same pattern. Following hints for sewing fur to fabric, sew lining to fur, right sides together, around long edge. Leave an opening large enough to turn the garment through. Turn garment right side out. Slipstitch opening, and clip and slipstitch armhole or sleeve edges. Press from fabric side, and understitch from lining side if necessary.

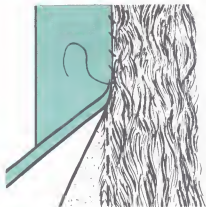
Lining with Fur

The Eskimos have more experience than anyone when it comes to using fur for practical purposes—like keeping warm! And for that you'll always find them putting the fur-side inside. Fur lining is as simple as an ordinary lining, if you keep some guidelines in mind. First, the coat must not fit too snugly, as the fur will use up wearing ease.

The nap of a straight-haired fur should fall toward the hem of the garment. Choose a strong fur or fake, with the hairs firmly attached to the backing. (A shedding fur could wreak havoc with your wardrobe!) The pile should be fairly smooth, since a very bulky one is very little warmer, but much chubbier, and you'd have to enlarge your garment excessively to accommodate the fur's thickness.

Prepare the lining pattern pieces for the seam treatment right for your fur, and eliminate any center back pleat. Use the fur only for the body of the garment, and follow the general sewing instructions appropriate for your fur to assemble the lining. Sleeves must be lined with a flat, smooth fabric for you to be able to get them on and off easily over other garments, and for comfortable movement. Quilted satin is perfect

for all-over warmth, and the knitted wristlets available at notions counters keep the wind out of your sleeves. Clip or notch and turn the garment interfacing with a long running stitch, and slipstitch the turned facing edge to the fur or the ribbon-bound fur edge.



Detachable Lining

One of the handiest things you can own is the coat-for-all-seasons. Make it with the fur lining detachable, and it will carry you through any kind of weather in comfort.

Make a coat with an ordinary fabric lining. Then assemble the fur lining as above, using just the pattern pieces for the body of the garment. Finish the lining armhole and facing edges according to our directions for real or fake fur. Turn and stitch hem. Find snap-tape, available by the yard, the length of the inside edge of the facing. The tape can be dyed to match your fur. Stitch one side of the snap-tape to the long facing edge of the fur lining. Then attach the other side of the snap-tape to the first, pin fur lining in place, and securely sew remaining tape edge by hand as it falls, around garment facing edge.

The Details

New outlooks on old standbys—closures and pockets in fur take on a different air. The unusual procedures involved in sewing the familiar styles in furs are covered in the following pages. For a decorative suggestion, see page 47.

Buttonholes

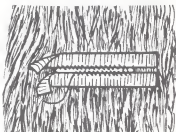
The classic buttonhole is a good thing to avoid when you're dealing with fur. The extra friction and strain it receives is hard on the fur's appearance, and may wear off the fragile hair. Consider other methods of closing—buttons can be attached for looks over a hook and eye or snap closing, or a high-fashion flair can be added with Dr. Zhivago frogs. But if the possible troubles are overruled, here are the best methods.

In A Slash: Most buttonholes that appear in a line down the front or back of a garment are done with this method. They should be made horizontally—perpendicular to the center front line. Chalk or pen-mark the position lines, and draw a clear perpendicular line at each end. Tape stays on the skin or backing are important to avoid stretching. Tape across both ends and along both sides of the marking. Slash carefully between tape edges.



Cut two binding strips per buttonhole, each 1" longer than the buttonhole slash, of $\frac{1}{4}$ " to $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide grosgrain, leather, or vinyl. Shave a scant $\frac{1}{16}$ " of the hair from along the lips of the slash. Place one strip on the fur side of the slash, right sides together. Sew all edges (tape, skin

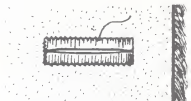
strip) together, using a whipstitch or blanket stitch, or a tiny machine zigzag. Sew just along the edge, being careful to stitch all the way to both ends of the slash. Sew other binding strip along remaining edge as above.



Turn both strips to the wrong side, finger pressing the tiny bound edge. Sew binding to tape on wrong side.



Where interfacing is used, the buttonhole should be constructed first, and a rectangle of interfacing cut away to $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the finished buttonhole edges. It is then sewn to the binding with close stitches.



Real fur facings can just be slashed and firmly overcast to the binding of the buttonhole edges. Facings on fake fur must be bound the same way in the corresponding buttonhole position, and the binding

on both sets of buttonhole edges are sewn together by hand.



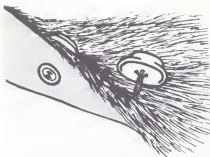
In A Seam: Since seams may be handled quite differently in furs and fake furs, there are several different seam buttonhole techniques. Those in real fur and fakes with narrow seams are handled just as above, omitting reference to taping edges, since they are already taped as a part of the seam treatment. Stitch seam, leaving buttonhole open. Tape across ends at right angles to buttonhole and proceed with binding.

Wide seam allowances in fakes provide an easy, unbound buttonhole. Tape seam first. Backstitch and knot seam thread firmly at buttonhole markings when you stitch the seam. Tape should be caught in seam as shown, and fastened with hand stitches between markings for strength. Then seam allowance is hemmed back to form a self-binding.



Buttons

Sew buttons on with waxed heavy-duty button and carpet thread. Reinforce by sewing through a small button on the back of the fabric as you sew the front one, and make a thread shank, the length of the garment's thickness at the buttonhole, plus $\frac{1}{8}$ " for movement.



Shank buttons can be applied to fur by another method. Punch a small hole with an awl in the front layer of fur, but not through the facing. Cut a 3" long piece of $\frac{1}{4}$ " twill tape, thread the button on it, and draw the ends through the hole toward the wrong side of the fur. Stitch each end separately and securely to the skin or backing, leaving a sufficient tape loop on the fur side.



Pockets

The catch-all pocket, while a hazard to the more delicate furs because of the constant abrasion, may prove, as usual, to be indispensable. The pouch pocket is easily inserted in a vertical seam or slash.

If a regular seam allowance is used on a fake fur garment, pouch pockets are applied just as they are to any other fabric. Sew tape by hand along the pocket foldline. Tack down the edges of the finished pocket to keep it in place.

For a pocket in a seam without seam allowances, prepare opening and apply tape and grosgrain as for

the buttonhole. Cut pocket of lining fabric, using regular pattern shape for one section, a larger rectangle for the other. Sew pocket sections to ribbon while it is still on outside of garment. (Rectangle goes on back edge of garment.)



Turn through opening; pin and stitch pocket edges together as they fall. Trim extra fabric away.

Hooks and Eyes

Large, covered hooks and eyes or crochet covered rings are especially created for the purpose of fastening fur garments. For fakes, just stitch hooks, eyes, or rings securely to backing. For real furs, here's another way.

Place the hook on the wrong side of the fur on the overlap side, along the foldline where the front edge turns into the facing. Cut a 1/2" slit on the foldline. With the front of the hook against the facing of the garment, push the bill of the hook through the slit. Insert a 3" piece of 1/4" twill tape as shown, through the loops at the back of the hook, and pull the hook back against the edge of the fur. Cross the ends of the tape, and stitch through the cross to fasten it to skin. Sew up slit. Attach eyes to underlap the same way.



The crocheted ring is attached by drawing twill tape through the ring, pulling ends through a slit in the fur from the right side, and stitching down to skin or backing the same as for a shank button, page 43.

Snaps

Large, covered snaps are another recommended way to fasten fur. They are usually available pre-covered in neutral colors, but you may cover your own. Cut a fabric circle twice the diameter of the snap. Take a running stitch around fabric edge. Place a snap section face down in the middle, draw the thread up to gather the extra fabric on the back, and sew securely.



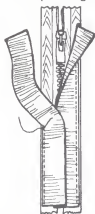
Attach snaps to fur by reinforcing the skin or backing with stay fabric or iron-on mending tape where the snap is to go, and firmly stitching around edge of snap.

Zippers

Though they're tricky in fur, some zippers can be quite successful if you keep the hair far enough away from the zipper teeth so it will not catch. This is done by combining a flat fabric with the fur, and placing it nearest the zipper in one of several ways. Hand applications are recommended except for very short-haired furs. A decorative application is described on page 47. Invisible zippers are not recommended.

Slot Application: To prevent fur from being caught in a regular zipper, cover zipper teeth. Cut two pieces of grosgrain ribbon; position them on the right side of closed zip-

per so the ribbon edges lap just over the area of the zipper teeth. Stitch close to edge of zipper tape. Apply zipper in a regular slot technique for closed or separating zipper.



Lapped Application: For this application, the seam allowance on the overlap side of the placket must be faced with a flat fabric such as taffeta. Cut the placket facing two inches wide, and an inch longer than the zipper opening. Finish one long edge. Shave hair from seam allowances of fur. Press under raw edge of placket facing. Stitch to overlap side of fur close to edge by machine. Hand understitch. Proceed with regular lapped application.



Fur Ever

You'll want your masterwork to last a while! Caring for furs and fakes is a fairly simple matter, but neglecting them can mean the disappearance of that look of luxury. Their beauty depends on a smooth, lustrous nap and a supple texture. Here's how to keep them that way.

Both real and fake fur can be renewed most easily with a simple brushing, first against, then with the grain. Use a natural-bristle hairbrush or one designed for grooming dogs. For real furs, dampening the brush with a 50% white vinegar solution will remove a musty odor. Brush as above, allow to air-dry, and brush again with the grain. Do not use cleaning fluid on real fur—it can stiffen and dull it.

Always hang fur garments on strong, shaped or padded hangers. DON'T store real fur with moth balls, flakes, or spray. A carefully sealed cloth garment bag will permit fur to breathe and protect it from damage by moths. Never store fur in plastic. Keep it in a cool place that's not too dry. Valuable real furs can benefit from professional storage in which temperature and humidity are scientifically controlled for maximum safety and wear. Special storage is unnecessary for fakes—they're usually of synthetic fibers that moths won't touch.

Cleaning real fur is a fascinating process. The fur is tumbled in a bin with ground nut shells, then brushed and steamed to fluff up the hair. The regular dry cleaning technique uses a fluid that damages the fur—so always take it to a fur specialist.

Your guide to cleaning fakes is the label on the bolt. If it doesn't give specific laundering instructions, dry cleaning or fur cleaning are usually safest, but look carefully for hints, since many are designed to be machine-washed and tumble-dried.

Fur with a Difference

Fur lends itself beautifully to the fanciful touch. It's a historical luxury, and the precedent for the glimpse of fur acting the grand accent was set centuries ago. Such a precious commodity is a natural for use in small amounts—a collar and cuffs, a band or pocket, the coy and warming flattery of a fur-trimmed hood. Children love even tiny bits of fur where they can feel them, and grown-ups find the same exotic sense both a pleasure and a pacifier.

Fur Trim

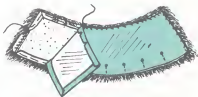
Collars, cuffs, patch pockets, and bindings are naturals for the rich extra of fur trim. A fur binding can easily hide a row of buttons, while leaving them perfectly accessible. Removable fur collar and cuffs can give the "everywhere coat" a new lease on life, and come right off when it goes to the cleaners. Fur pockets are a great design effect for a garment with character and the right proportions, and are prepared alike for fur or cloth garments.



The vast opportunities of fur accessories are also at your disposal now that you've acquired basic fur skills. Trace or improvise your own patterns for muffs, mittens, or ear-warming hats, then test them in felt for a perfect fit. Great coordinates for winter outfits, and a handy way to use up fur scraps.

The technique is identical for all these. Cut the fur from the adjusted pattern piece, leaving a $\frac{1}{8}$ " seam allowance for fake fur (shave hair from seam area), none for real fur. Tape the cut edges from the skin or backing side for stability. Cut interfacing and/or padding from the original pattern, and sew to garment following the hints on page 37.

Finish edges according to directions on page 34, in which the fur (not the ribbon) forms a roll at the edge. Choose the lining of a firm fabric that's fairly heavy. Cut it from regular pattern, leaving full seam allowances, and turn and press under $\frac{3}{4}$ " on all edges. Trim and clip. Pin to wrong side of fur, matching edges of lining to fur ribbon seam, keeping the collar shape. Slipstitch edge to ribbon so it is invisible.



Attach to garment with a firm slipstitch, reinforcing points of wear (such as corners of pockets) with a few extra stitches. The best way to fasten pockets securely is to sew them once from the wrong side of garment, and again from the outside. When garment is fur, be sure you pull the hairs out of the stitches.

Decorative Effects

Your mastery of the fundamentals of fur gives you the opportunity to play. Give your new skills some exercise with these special effects, and any others your creative imagination can devise.

Reverse Fur: When the fur back is a handsome suede, or the back of a fake is a tweedy-looking knit, why waste it? Have the advantages of the fur lining to keep you warm, and the back to face the world, in an unstructured single layer! Seams can be stitched in reverse (fur sides together) so the seam allowance or seam ridge falls toward the outside, or they can be made with a flat-fell or overlapped seam. The appearance of a reversed seam will vary with the fur, so experiment with the width before you cut. Simply turn all the hems, facings, and seam allowances to the outside of the garment for a built-in fur trim. Miter corners where facing meets hem, and fasten raw edges to skin or backing with a hemming stitch.



Decorative Zippers: This technique zips up your fur style to make both fashion and technical sense. First, stitch embroidered ribbon braid, or colorful grosgrain directly to zipper as close as possible to teeth. Miter at the bottom for an en-

closed zipper, and simply turn ends under for a separating zipper. Insert the zipper by sandwiching the raw fur edge between the ribbon on the right side and the zipper tape underneath. Baste and stitch the ribbon to the right side first, then turn and slip-stitch the zipper tape to the backing, forming a binding for the raw edge.



Fur Patchwork: Small pieces of natural fur from scraps, tails, or old garments, or different colors of similar-weight fake fur can be combined into exciting fur patchwork designs using patience and imagination. Herringbone, plaid, and multi-color patterns are all within your range.

Vary the coloring by using alternately two or three colors of fur, or take advantage of the natural variation in coloring of a fur pelt, and arrange the subtle changes so dark areas match light areas.



This kind of exercise is a perfect pillow project, and a great way to practice your new fur expertise.

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